

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

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PUBLIC SPACE APPLICATION REVIEW

DATE: March 19, 2010
TO: Public Space Committee
FROM: Joshua Ghaffari, Citywide Planner
SUBJECT: 35 K Street, NW

APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF

Applicant: Elizabeth Askew (Authorized Agent)
Location: This application is for a curb cut associated with a multi-unit residential project in Sursum Corda. It is located on the northeast corner of K Street NW and 1st Street NW. It is located in a C-2-A zoning district.
Proposal: The applicant is requesting to install a curb cut and paved driveway that is 24' in width.

BACKGROUND

The Office of Planning received the public space application for review on February 1, 2010.

BASIS OF REPORT

The Office of Planning (OP) has reviewed the application, considered existing site and adjacent site conditions, visited the site, completed research on the site to prepare this report, and coordinated with staff in OP's Neighborhood Planning Division. There are several policies in the Comprehensive Plan and DDOT's Design and Engineering Manual that relate to this application:

Comprehensive Plan

Policy UD-2.2 Designing for Successful Neighborhoods

The sense of place in the Districts neighborhoods is a function of their cultural history, physical features and visual qualities. This is especially evident in both historic row house neighborhoods as well as single family neighborhoods where particular set backs, architectural styles, and building forms prevail. In neighborhoods of high architectural quality and strong identity, a greater emphasis on design compatibility and appropriate scale is needed.

Policy UD-2.2.1 Neighborhood Character and Identity

Strengthen the defining visual qualities of Washington's neighborhoods. This should be achieved in part by relating the scale of infill development, alterations, renovations and additions to existing neighborhood context.

Action UD-3.1-C: DDOT Public Space Permits

Ensure that all public space permits, including but not limited to permits for dumpsters, electric wiring, tree removal, excavation, parking, fences, retaining walls, signs and banners, sidewalk cafés, curb cuts, and special displays, are not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and contribute to the policies laid out ... for the use of street space.

KEY ISSUES

The proposal is for the installation of a new curb cut and driveway on 1st Street NW in conjunction with the construction of new multi-unit dwellings. The new driveway is 24' wide and would serve as the main egress point for this development.

In general, the District discourages permitting new curb cuts because they cause conflicts with pedestrians using the adjacent sidewalk. However, in this case the curb cut is for a property that does not have access to an alley and it is serving multiple dwellings. The driveway on 1st Street NW provides a connection through the development and to 1st Terrace NW, which is on the east side of the property.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

The proposed curb cut and driveway will provide a connection with the surrounding street grid and will serve multiple dwellings.

The Office of Planning recommends that this application be approved.